AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-101. (Cancelled).

102. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a rebate claim from a purchaser purchasing one or more products from a marketing entity in a single purchase transaction, in which one or more of the products purchased is associated with a promotional offer, comprising the steps of:

(a)   receiving at a processing site from a supplier of the products information relating to the promotions associated with such products;

(b)   receiving at the processing site from the purchaser subsequent to the completion of the purchase, a unique transaction identifier, such identifier being assigned at the point-of-sale of a purchase transaction and being independent of the identification of products purchased in such purchase transaction;

(c)   receiving at the processing site from the marketing entity information including ~~relating to~~ the unique transaction identifier and the products purchased in that transaction;

(d)   using at the processing site, the unique transaction identifier provided by the purchaser to access the information provided by the supplier and the marketing entity to ascertain the applicability of promotions to the goods in the identified purchase transaction; and

(e)   validating each of the applicable promotions.

103. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 102 further comprising:

(f)   ascertaining the value of the applicable promotions, and providing the purchaser with the ascertained value subsequent to the completion of the ~~purchase purchaser~~ purchase transaction.

104. (Previously presented) A computerized system for processing a rebate claim submitted by a purchaser who, during a sales transaction, had purchased one or more products, at least one of which may qualify for one or more rebate promotions, and in which such purchaser had been given a transaction code for identifying such transaction; said system comprising:

at least one data input port for receiving:

(a)   product promotion rebate information containing an identification of eligible products;

(b)   a plurality of purchase data records, each purchase data record pertaining to a sales transaction, wherein each purchase data record (i) includes a transaction code for identifying the sales transaction and (ii) identifies at least one product purchased in connection with such transaction; and

(c)   a purchaser rebate claim containing a transaction code assigned at the point of sale;

a memory communicating with said at least one data input port (i) for storing as a stored data record each transaction code and the identity of all products associated with such transaction code, and (ii) for storing said product promotion rebate information;

a processor communicating with said at least one data input port and said memory and which is programmed, in response to receiving a purchaser rebate claim:

(i) to seek to match the transaction code submitted in the purchase rebate claim with a transaction code of a stored data record; and

(ii) upon successfully matching a transaction code submitted with a rebate claim with a transaction code stored in a stored data record, to compare a first product contained in said stored data record with the stored product promotion rebate information to determine if such first product is eligible for one or more rebates.

105. (Previously presented) The computerized system of Claim 104, wherein the processor is further programmed to:

(iii) to determine if said stored data record contains additional products and, if so, to compare each additional product with the stored product promotion rebate information to determine if such product is eligible for one or more rebates; and

(iv) to validate each rebate for all eligible products contained in the stored data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

106. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 105, wherein said product promotion rebate information further contains the amount of each rebate for each eligible product, and wherein said processor is programmed to determine the total value of rebates for the eligible products in the stored data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

107. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 104, in which the processor is programmed, responsive to an event, to issue a rebate to the purchaser.

108. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 107 wherein such event is a request from the purchaser.

109. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 107, wherein the product promotion rebate information further contains an expiration date, and wherein such event is the expiration of a promotion.

110. (Previously presented) A method of processing a rebate claim submitted by a purchaser who, during a sales transaction, had purchased two or more products, at least one of which qualifies for one or more rebate promotions, and in which such purchaser had been given a transaction code for identifying such transaction; comprising the steps of:

(a)   receiving and electronically storing product promotion rebate information containing an identification of eligible products;

(b)   receiving and storing a plurality of purchase data records, each purchase data record pertaining to a sales transaction, wherein each purchase data record includes a transaction code for identifying a sales transaction and identifies at least two products purchased in connection with such transaction;

(c)   receiving a purchaser rebate claim containing a transaction code and purchaser identification information;

(d)   using a processor, matching the transaction code submitted in the purchase rebate claim with a transaction code of a stored purchase data record;

(e)   comparing each product contained in said stored purchase data record with the stored product promotion rebate information to determine if such product is eligible for one or more rebates; and

(f)   validating each rebate for all eligible products contained in the stored purchase data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

111. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 110, wherein at least one purchased product does not qualify for a rebate promotion.

112. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 110, wherein said product promotion rebate information contains the amount of each rebate for each eligible product, and further comprising the step of determining the total value of rebates for the eligible products in the stored purchase data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

113. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 110, comprising further the step, responsive to an event, of issuing a rebate to the purchaser.

114. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 113, wherein such event is a request from the purchaser.

115. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 113, wherein the product promotion rebate information further contains an expiration date, and wherein such event is the expiration of a promotion.

116. (Previously presented) A method of processing a rebate claim submitted by a purchaser who, during a sales transaction, had purchased one or more products, at least one of which qualifies for one or more rebate promotions, and in which such purchaser had been given a transaction code for identifying such transaction; comprising the steps of:

(a)   receiving and electronically storing product promotion rebate information containing an identification of eligible products;

(b)   receiving a plurality of purchase data records, each purchase data record pertaining to a sales transaction, wherein each purchase data record (i) includes a transaction code for identifying a sales transaction and (ii) identifies at least one product purchased in connection with such transaction;

(c)   electronically storing as a stored data record each transaction code and the identity of all products associated with such transaction code;

(d)   receiving a purchaser rebate claim containing a transaction code and purchaser identification information;

(e)   using a processor, matching the transaction code submitted in the purchase rebate claim with a transaction code of a stored data record;

(f)   upon successfully matching a rebate claim transaction code with a stored data record, comparing a first product contained in said stored data record with the product promotion rebate information to determine if such product is eligible for one or more rebates;

(g)   determining if said stored data record contains additional products and, if so, comparing each additional product with the product promotion rebate information to determine if such product is eligible for one or more rebates; and

(h)   validating each rebate for all eligible products contained in the stored data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

117. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 116, wherein said product promotion rebate information further contains the amount of each rebate for each eligible product, and further comprising the step of determining the total value of rebates for the eligible products in the stored purchase data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

118. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 116, comprising further the step, responsive to an event, of issuing a rebate to the purchaser.

119. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 118, wherein such event is a request from the purchaser.

120. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 118, wherein the product promotion rebate information further contains an expiration date, and wherein such event is the expiration of a promotion.

121. (Currently amended) A system for administering and processing rebate claims for products eligible for one or more rebates, said system comprising a point-of-sale computer system and a remote rebate processing center having a rebate processing center computer system;

wherein said point-of-sale computer system comprises:

(a)   a terminal for processing a transaction involving the sale of one or more products, irrespective of whether such products are eligible for a rebate, and for assigning to a purchaser a transaction code for identifying such transaction;

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(b)   programming for generating a purchase data record of said transaction which includes said transaction code and identifies at least one product purchased in connection with such transaction;

(c)   a data link for establishing communication with said rebate processing center computer system for transmitting said purchase data record;

and wherein said rebate processing center computer system comprises:

a memory for storing as a stored data record a plurality of transaction codes, and the identity of all products associated with each transaction code, received from said point-of-sale computer system, and for storing product promotion rebate information containing an identification of eligible products; and

a processor which is programmed, in response to receiving a rebate claim from a purchaser containing a transaction code:

(i) to seek to match the transaction code submitted in the rebate claim with a transaction code of a stored data record;

(ii) upon successfully matching a rebate claim transaction code with a stored data record transaction code, to compare a first product contained in said stored data record with the stored product promotion rebate information to determine if such first product is eligible for one or more rebates;

(iii) to determine if said stored data record contains additional products, and, if so, to compare each additional product with the stored product ~~production~~ promotion rebate information to determine if such product is eligible for one or more rebates; and

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(iv) to validate each rebate for all eligible products contained in the stored data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

122. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 121, wherein said product promotion rebate information further contains the amount of each rebate for each eligible product, and wherein said processor is programmed to determine the total value of rebates for the eligible products in the stored data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

123. (Previously presented) A system as defined in claim 121, in which the processor is programmed, responsive to an event, to issue a rebate to the purchaser.

124. (Currently amended) A method for administering and processing rebate claims for products eligible for one or more rebates, said method comprising the steps, at a point-of-sale, of:

(a)   processing a transaction involving the sale of one or more products, irrespective of whether such products are eligible for a rebate, and assigning to a purchaser a transaction code for identifying such transaction;

(b)   generating a purchase data record of such transaction which includes said transaction code and identifies at least one product purchased in connection with such transaction;

(c)   transmitting said purchase data record to a remote rebate processing center; and further comprising the steps, at a remote rebate claim processing system, of:

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receiving said purchase data record and electronically storing as a stored data record the transaction code and the identity of all products associated with the transaction code contained in said purchase data record;

electronically storing product promotion rebate information containing an identification of eligible products; and

using a processor, in response to receiving a rebate claim from a purchaser containing a transaction code,

(i) seek to match the transaction code submitted in the rebate claim with a transaction code of a stored data record;

(ii) upon successfully matching a rebate claim transaction code with a stored data record transaction code, compare a first product contained in said stored data record with the stored product promotion rebate information to determine if such first product is eligible for one or more rebates;

(iii) determine if said stored data record contains additional products and, if so, compare each additional product with the stored product production promotion rebate information to determine if such product is eligible for one or more rebates; and

(iv) validate each rebate for all eligible products contained in the stored data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

125. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 124, wherein said product promotion rebate information contains the amount of each rebate for each eligible product, and further comprising the step of determining the total value of rebates

for the eligible products in the stored data record associated with the purchaser rebate claim.

126. (Previously presented) A method as defined in claim 124, further comprising the step, in responsive to an event, of issuing a rebate to the purchaser.